

March 6, 2017

Dear Co-Chair Kennedy, Co-Chair Miner, Co-Chair Demicco, Vice Chair Flexer, Vice Chair Gresko, Vice Chair Somers, Ranking Member Harding, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee,

I care about animals, including wildlife, and I vote.

Please accept this public hearing testimony for the following bill:

1) OPPOSE SB 522 -- would allow BEAR HUNTING, which I strongly oppose. Learning how to remove attractants (e.g., accessible garbage, pet food left outside) and, if necessary, how to haze and exclusion strategies, are the humane, simple, effective, and science-based solutions to conflicts with wildlife.

An outrageous claim being made by proponents is that population size will double every few years, but this is not true: bears are a very slow-to-reproduce species, and in addition, have many natural checks to their population size. Slow reproduction rates make bear populations susceptible to overhunting. We must learn from recent experiences in other states, such as New Jersey where even mothers and cubs were recklessly killed, or Florida, where the state agency had to stop the hunt after one year because too many bears were killed. With only around 700 bears in the entire state of Connecticut, we need to protect our bears from a similar hunting frenzy, and preserve these bears for future generations.

I do believe that education of the public is the better, more humane way to go.

Thank you very much,

Karen Schnitzer